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AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A method for managing a user community, comprising:

defining a set of user attributes for each users in the user community; and

identifying by a first administrator, a permission level for managing each of the user attributes, wherein the permission level defines administrative operations that can or cannot be performed by a second administrator on a user attribute.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising defining by the first administrator, restricted values that an the second administrator can or cannot assign for the user attributes.

4. (Amended) A method for managing user information associated with a user community, comprising:

defining a set of user attributes from the user information for each users in the user community;

identifying by a first administrator, a permission level for each of the user attributes, wherein the permission level defines operations that a second administrator can or cannot perform on a user attribute; and

managing the user attributes according to each of the permission levels.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Amended) The method according to claim 4, further comprising defining by the first administrator, restricted values that an the second administrator can or cannot assign for the user attributes.

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7. (Amended) A method for enabling an administrator to control administration of a user community, comprising:

providing user information associated with the user community ~~to the~~ ~~for use by a~~ ~~first~~ administrator;

prompting the ~~first~~ administrator to define a set of user attributes for ~~each~~ users in the user community;

prompting the ~~first~~ administrator to identify a permission level for ~~each~~ of the user attributes, wherein the permission level defines operations that a second administrator can or cannot perform on a user attribute; and

using the identified permission levels to control administration of the user information.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Amended) The method according to claim 8 7, further comprising prompting the ~~first~~ administrator to define restricted values that the second administrator can or cannot assign for any of the user attributes.

10. (Amended) A user community administration tool for managing user information associated with a user community, comprising:

a domain definition component that defines the user community into at least one administrative domain, the domain definition component comprising a user group specifying component that specifies at least one arbitrary group of users from the user community and a user attribute definition component that defines a set of permissible user attributes for the at least one arbitrary group of users, wherein the user attribute definition component comprises an attribute permission component that enables a first administrator to specify a permission level for each of the user attributes, wherein the permission level defines operations that can or cannot be performed by a second administrator on a user attribute; and

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an information management component that manages the user information associated with the administrative domain in accordance with the permissible user attributes.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Amended) The tool according to claim 10, wherein the user attribute definition component comprises an attribute restricted value component that defines restricted values that ~~an~~ the second administrator can or cannot assign for any of the user attributes.

14. (Original) The tool according to claim 10, further comprising an administrative privileges component that grants administrative privileges for the administrative domain.

15. (Original) The tool according to claim 14, wherein the administrative privileges component delegates the granted administrative privileges for the administrative domain.

16. (Amended) A system for managing user information associated with a user community, comprising:

a database directory containing a plurality of user information;

a user community administration tool to manage the plurality of user information in the database directory,[[;]] the user community administration tool comprising a domain definition component that defines the user community into at least one administrative domain, the domain definition component comprising a user group specifying component that specifies at least one arbitrary group of users from the user community and a user attribute definition component that defines a set of permissible user attributes for the at least one arbitrary group of users, wherein the user attribute definition component comprises an attribute permission component that enables a first

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administrator to specify a permission level for each of the user attributes, wherein the permission level defines operations that can or cannot be performed by a second administrator on a user attribute. [;] and an information management component that manages the user information associated with the administrative domain in accordance with the permissible user attributes; and

a first computing unit configured to serve the user community administration tool and the database directory.

17. (Original) The system according to claim 16, further comprising a second computing unit configured to execute the user community administration tool served from the first computing unit over a network.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Amended) The system according to claim 16, wherein the user attribute definition component comprises an attribute restricted value component that defines restricted values that ~~an~~ the second administrator can or cannot assign for any of the user attributes.

21. (Amended) A user community administration tool for providing administration of a user community, comprising:

means for defining the user community into at least one administrative domain, the administrative domain definition means comprising means for specifying at least one arbitrary group of users from the user community and means for defining a set of permissible user attributes for the at least one arbitrary group of users, wherein the user attribute definition component comprises an attribute permission component that enables a first administrator to specify a permission level for each of the user attributes, wherein the permission level defines operations that can or cannot be performed by a second administrator on a user attribute; and

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means for managing the user information associated with the administrative domain in accordance with the permissible user attributes.

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Amended) The tool according to claim 21, wherein the user attribute definition means comprises means for defining restricted values that an the second administrator can or cannot assign for any of the user attributes.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Cancelled)

27. Cancelled)

28. (Amended) A computer-readable medium storing computer instructions for instructing a computer system to enable an a first administrator to control administration of a user community, the computer instructions comprising:

providing user information associated with the user community to the first administrator;

prompting the first administrator to define a set of user attributes for each of the users in the user community;

prompting the first administrator to identify a permission level for each of the user attributes, wherein each permission level defines operations that a second administrator can or cannot perform on a user attribute; and

using the identified permission levels to control administration of the user information.

29. (Cancelled)

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30. (Amended) The computer-readable medium according to claim 28, further comprising instructions for prompting the first administrator to define restricted values that the second administrator can or cannot assign for any of the user attributes.

31. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the user attributes comprise user information associated with a user community.

32. (New) The method of claim 31, wherein the user attributes are selected from the group consisting of employer name, employer job description, employer address and state of employment.

33. (New) The method of claim 31, wherein the user attributes are selected from the group consisting of resources for which permission to access the resources has been granted and type of equipment used.

34. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the user attributes are selected from the group consisting of employer name, employer job description, employer address and state of employment.

35. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the user attributes are selected from the group consisting of resources for which permission to access the resources has been granted and type of equipment used.

36. (New) The method of claim 7, wherein the user attributes are selected from the group consisting of employer name, employer job description, employer address and state of employment.

37. (New) The method of claim 7, wherein the user attributes are selected from the group consisting of resources for which permission to access the resources has been granted and type of equipment used.

38. (New) A method for enabling administration of information associated with a user community, comprising:

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providing user information associated with the user community to a first administrator, wherein the user information comprises a set of user attributes for users in the user community;

prompting the first administrator to identify a permission level for managing the user attributes, wherein the permission level defines administrative operations that a second administrator can or cannot perform on the user attribute;

prompting the first administrator to define restricted values that can be assigned to the user attributes, wherein the restricted values specify values that the second administrator can or cannot assign to the user attribute; and

using the identified permission levels and the restricted values to control administration of information associated with the user community.